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**Media Release**  
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**Biden Urges Congress to Increase Federal Funding for Victims of Crime**  
**51 Attorneys General propose raising spending cap on Crime Victims Fund**

Wilmington – Delaware Attorney General Beau Biden and his colleagues in 50 states and territories urged Congress this week to increase support for victim services through a federal grant program that provide essential funding for state and local victim assistance programs. In a joint letter to federal lawmakers the Attorneys General called for increasing to \$1 billion the annual spending cap on the Crime Victims Fund, which was established by the 1984 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). Monies in the fund come entirely through collections from criminal fines, special assessments and other penalties paid by federal criminal offenders.

“We have an obligation to provide victims with the support they need to fully participate in the criminal justice system and to rebuild their lives,” Attorney General Biden said. “By releasing more of the money that is already held by the Crime Victims Fund – money that has been paid by offenders as a part of their sentences – we’ll be better able to meet the critical needs of crime victims and their families.”

In Delaware, monies received from the Crime Victims Fund are disbursed by the Delaware Criminal Justice Council, which has seen its annual allocation from the Fund drop from \$1,650,000 in Fiscal Year 2011 to \$1,513,000 in Fiscal Year 2012. The Criminal Justice Council funds domestic violence shelters, counseling services, and victim services staff in state and local government agencies and non-profit services providers. These programs support thousands of survivors of homicide, domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, crimes against seniors, and other violent crimes.

Every year, VOCA victim assistance grants provide vital assistance that supports more than 4,000 agencies nationwide in providing services to an average of 3.7 million victims of assault, robbery, gang violence, intoxicated drivers, fraud, elder abuse, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, sexual assault, stalking and survivors of homicide. VOCA also helps victims with financial assistance for medical care, mental health counseling, lost wages, and funeral and burial costs.

The Attorneys General letter is available online at [http://www.naag.org/sign-on\\_archive.php](http://www.naag.org/sign-on_archive.php).

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